

Notes From The Field: *NW*

Duck Opener Report 9/25/18

UPDATE:

Was this helpful? Let us know by taking this [3 question survey](#).

Iron Last updated on 8/29/18

Regarding duck broods, we have observed similar numbers compared to previous years for mallards, wood ducks, blue-winged teal and other ducks. Canada Goose production seemed similar to previous years as well. For total number of birds, we expect similar numbers to previous years in the area. Aquatic food availability is similar as well with milfoil, pondweed, and wild rice being our top wetland foods on the landscape. year.

Burnett

Early seasons in this area showed low pressure for early teal season. While early Canada goose season and the youth season saw low to moderate pressure. We typically see moderate pressure in this area for duck opener and will expect similar pressure to years past. Our most abundant ducks in the area are wood ducks, ring-necked ducks and mallards. Wood ducks may be where they can feed on the abundant acorns. Flowages with rice look good for ring necks. Water levels are normal as we missed the rains that southern Wisconsin have received the past few weeks. We have had mild and rainy weather recently and expect cool and potentially rainy weather for the regular duck season opener.

Regarding duck broods, we have observed similar numbers compared to previous years for blue-winged teal and wood ducks. Mallards seemed to have had good production this year as we observed more broods this year compared to prior years. Canada Goose broods however seemed fewer than in previous year in our area, likely due to the late snow we received in April. For total number of birds, we expect similar numbers compared to previous years in the area. Aquatic food availability is normal with wild rice being our top wetland food on the landscape.

Price

Early seasons in this area showed low to moderate pressure for early teal season. We typically see low to moderate pressure in this area for duck opener and will expect similar pressure to years past. Our most abundant ducks in the area are mallard, wood ducks and mergansers. We have had very variable weather recently and expect cool and potentially rainy weather for the regular duck season opener.

Regarding duck broods, we have observed similar numbers compared to previous years for mallards and other ducks. Wood ducks seemed to have had good production this year as we saw more broods this year compared to previous years. We saw fewer broods for blue-winged teal though this year. Canada Goose broods seemed to have similar brood numbers as previous years as well. For total number of birds, we expect similar numbers compared to previous years in the area. Aquatic food availability is normal with wild rice, small tubers, and macroinvertebrates being our top wetland foods on the landscape.

St. Croix/Pierce

Early seasons in this area showed low pressure for early teal, moderate to high for early Canada goose, while the youth seasons saw moderate pressure. We typically see high pressure in this area for the duck season opener and will expect similar pressure to previous years. Our most abundant ducks in the area are mallard, wood ducks and blue-winged teal. With recent weather some of the wetlands that were drying up are now filling back up with water, but you will still find water levels to be lower than normal. Most recently we have been experiencing warm, windy and rainy weather. We expect cool and potentially rainy weather for the regular duck season opener.

Regarding duck broods, we have observed similar numbers compared to previous years for mallards, wood ducks and blue-winged teal. Canada goose and other duck production seemed lower than previous years though. For total number of birds, we expect similar numbers to previous years in the area. Aquatic food availability is similar as well with arrowhead, smartweed and other submersed aquatics being our top wetland foods on the landscape.

Statewide

Wisconsin statewide outlook for this season looks similar to previous years. Brood counts seem average for mallards, blue-winged teal wood ducks and other ducks. Canada goose numbers however seem to have been affected statewide due to the late snowfall we received in April that may affected our nesting geese. Late snowstorms in April set nesting back and caused a lot of first attempt failures across the state. Water levels across the state are variable with many places being near normal, with exceptions in southern and central Wisconsin. Southern Wisconsin has seen almost daily rainfall starting mid-August making water levels considerably higher than normal. Wetland food across the state seems to be similar to previous years and crop harvest also seems to be similar in most areas with corn being slightly ahead of a normal year.

To be successful we encourage all of you to get out and scout before your hunting trips. Waterfowl hunters in Wisconsin have shown that hunters who scout 3 times before hunting shoot three times as many birds. It will be important also to check your spots out before hunting as some spots may not be huntable due to high water.

Be safe and happy hunting!

5 Important things to know:

1. North duck zone will open one week later than in previous years, resulting in a single statewide opener for the North, South and Mississippi zones on Sept. 29;
2. Elimination of the Horicon Canada goose Management Zone (resulting in a single statewide regular goose zone);
3. Increase in the daily Canada goose bag limit to three birds per day and there is a second split in the Southern Canada goose zone resulting in a goose season that is open during the Christmas and New Year's holidays; and
4. Canada goose hunters, registration of Canada geese and in-field validation of the Canada goose hunting permit is no longer required.
5. Check out [The Basics of Waterfowl Hunting in Wisconsin](#) document on the [Waterfowl Hunting](#) webpage along with other useful tools in our Hunter resources tab for a few tips and tricks!

If you have any questions, please contact Trenton Rohrer WDNR Assistant Migratory Game Bird Ecologist send him an email or call.

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